

**IN THE SPECIFICATION**

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please amend the paragraph beginning on Pg. 4, Line 5 as follows:

Illustrated in FIG. 1 is a functional block diagram of one of a plurality of switching devices of an enterprise switch with which the invention may be implemented. The switching device 100 is preferably one of a plurality of switching devices operatively coupled to one another via a common switch fabric (not shown). The switching device 100 is also operatively coupled to a plurality communications ~~network~~ networks, such as an Internet Protocol (IP) network embodied in a local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), metropolitan area network (MAN), or a combination thereof, for example. Some embodiments of the present invention may also be employed with packet and frame processing in asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) switches and token ring switches.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on Pg. 6, Line 16 as follows:

Illustrated in FIG. 2 is a detailed functional block diagram of the multistage classifier 132 for performing fast and accurate classification of ingress traffic. Upon receipt of a PDU 270, the parsing engine 136 inspects the PDU and extracts a plurality of nibbles. In the preferred embodiment, a total of four nibbles are ~~extraets~~ extracted to perform CoS/QoS, although the invention may be implemented with more or less nibbles. Each of the nibbles comprises one or more bits selected from the PDU, including any of the following packet fields:

1. source address;
2. destination address;
3. input port 102-104 on which the packet was received;
4. source transmission control protocol (TCP) port or user datagram port (UDP);
5. destination transmission control protocol (TCP) port or user datagram port (UDP);

6. layer 3 or layer 4 packet type;
7. TCP acknowledgement flag;
8. acknowledgement bit;
9. type of service value; and
10. payload.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on Pg. 8, Line 6 as follows:

Illustrated in FIG. 3 is a representation of the plurality of hierarchical tables 137A-137D populated with symbolic classification criteria against which the plurality of nibbles extracted from a PDU are compared. In the preferred embodiment, there are four hierarchical tables 137A-137D that are examined in order. The classification criteria of hierarchical tables 137A-137D are logically organized in what resembles, but is different from, a binary-trie in which each successive table corresponds to a different nibble. Each of the hierarchical tables 137A-137D comprises one or more criterion groups, each criterion group comprising one or more entries, each entry comprising a criterion and a pointer. The criteria in the preferred embodiment represents a possible value of the associated nibble ~~35-353~~ 350-353 while the pointer provides a key into a subsequent table. The final table, rules table 137E, in turn, retains the packet processing rule selected upon completion ~~of the~~ of the search of hierarchical tables 137A-137D in the manner described herein. Each of the tables 137A-137E may be organized into one or more physical memory devices, including random access memory (RAM), dynamic RAM (DRAM) and/or static RAM (SRAM), for example.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on Pg. 16, Line 9 as follows:

The nibble is then compared against the current criterion of the current criterion group in the nibble comparing step 606. In the first iteration through the comparing step 606, the first nibble is compared against the first criterion of the first criterion group

pointed to by the key. In this embodiment, a single criterion is tested at a time. If a match is detected (step 608), the pointer associated with the matching criterion is retrieved from the matching entry (step 610). The quality of the match is accessed and recorded (step 612) as a function of the path between the first hierarchical table 137A and last hierarchical table 137D. After matching and scoring the criterion of the current criterion group, the classification method 600 proceeds to test the next nibble at the next hierarchical table (step 618) as long as there are hierarchical tables to be ~~search~~ searched (step 614). If a match is detected at each of the subsequent child hierarchical tables, the rules table testing step 614 will eventually be answered in the affirmative and the method 600 will use the pointer corresponding to the matching entry of the final hierarchical table (step 620) to retrieve the associated rule applied to the PDU (step 622).